

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) An aqueous based structured surfactant system, having solid-suspending properties and comprising: water; surfactants, said surfactants consisting essentially of non-ionic and/or zwitterionic surfactants, each comprising at least one hydrophobic group and a non-ionic or zwitterionic hydrophilic group; from 0 to 50%, based on the weight of surfactant, of acids and/or alcohols having a hydrophobic group and a carboxyl or hydroxyl group respectively; and from 0 to saturation of a water-soluble carbohydrate; said surfactant, acid, alcohol, and carbohydrate being present in proportions adapted to form a pourable structured suspending system; characterised in that at least 30% by weight of said hydrophobic groups are bent chain groups.
2. (currently amended) A ~~non-ionic~~ structured surfactant system[[,]] according to claim 1 characterised in that the proportion of hydrophobic groups, which are bent chain, is greater than that corresponding to the maximum or turning point value in the graph of conductivity of against % bent chain groups.
3. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~either of~~ claims 1 and 2, which is an expanded La-phase, and which comprises water, a dissolved carbohydrate, and a non-ionic surfactant characterised by a small angle X-ray diffraction peak corresponding to a d-spacing greater than 50 nm.

4. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the hydrophobic groups are aliphatic hydrocarbon groups having more than 10, but less than 30, carbon atoms.
5. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the proportion of bent chain hydrophobic groups is greater than 40%.
6. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the proportion of bent chain hydrophobic groups is greater than 75%, based on the total weight of hydrophobic groups.
7. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the bent chain groups are selected from oleyl, erucyl, palmitoleyl, nervonyl and isostearyl.
8. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the total proportion of surfactant is between 2 and 35%.
9. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the non-ionic surfactants are selected from polyglyceryl fatty esters, fatty acid ethoxylates, fatty acid monoalkanolamides, fatty acid dialkanolamides, fatty acid alkanolamide ethoxylates, propylene glycol monoesters, fatty alcohol propoxylates, alcohol ethoxylates, alkyl phenol ethoxylates, fatty amine alkoxylates and fatty acid glyceryl ester ethoxylates.
10. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing claim 1 wherein characterised in that~~ the surfactants have a mean HLB greater than 6.5.

11. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1 wherein ~~characterised in that~~ the surfactants have a mean HLB greater than 9.
12. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1 wherein ~~characterised in that~~ the surfactant comprises a mixture of at least one relatively high HLB surfactant with at least one relatively low HLB surfactant.
13. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 12 wherein ~~characterised in that~~ the high HLB surfactant has an HLB greater than 10.
14. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 12 wherein ~~characterised in that~~ the high HLB surfactant has an HLB greater than 14.5.
15. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 12 wherein ~~characterised in that~~ the low HLB surfactant has an HLB less than 8.
16. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 12 wherein the mixture has a ~~characterised in that~~ the weight ratio of low HLB surfactant to high HLB surfactant is of less than 2:1, but more than 1:10.
17. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, characterised in that zwitterionic surfactants are present in a proportion less than 70%, by weight of the total surfactant.
18. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, characterised in that the zwitterionic surfactant is lecithin.

19. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, characterised in that it contains a carbohydrate, which is a mono or disaccharide sugar.
20. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, characterised in that the carbohydrate is present in a concentration between 15% and 75%, by weight.
21. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, characterised in that it contains an electrolyte, in concentrations of 0 to 4%, by weight.
22. (currently amended) A structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1, ~~for suspending further comprising a~~ water insoluble pharmaceutical or veterinary active ingredients, which consists essentially of water; from 0% to saturation of a dissolved carbohydrate; from 0 to 10% by weight, based on the weight of the suspending system, of electrolyte; and from 3 to 10% by weight, based on the weight of the suspending system, of a surfactant mixture consisting of (A) a pharmacologically or veterinarily acceptable surfactant, having an HLB greater than 10, and (B) a pharmacologically or veterinarily acceptable surfactant, with a HLB less than 10, oleic acid or a phospholipid in a weight ratio of from 10:1 to 1:1, (A):(B).
23. (currently amended) A ~~pharmaceutical or veterinary suspension comprising a~~ ~~pharmacologically or veterinarily acceptable~~ structured surfactant system according to ~~any foregoing~~ claim 1 ~~further comprising and~~ suspended particles of at least one pharmacological or veterinary active substance, said particles comprising at least two populations differentiated with respect to size and including a first population, of non-colloidal particles comprising at least 10% based on the total weight of the particles, and a second population of particles comprising at least 10%, based on the

total weight of the particles, wherein said first population has a mean particle size at least ten times the mean particle size of said second population.

24. (currently amended) A method of suspending pharmaceutical or veterinary active ingredients ~~in a structured surfactant system according to any of claims 1 to 22~~ comprising:
- providing a structured surfactant system, having solid-suspending properties and comprising: water; surfactants, said surfactants consisting essentially of non-ionic and/or zwitterionic surfactants, each comprising at least one hydrophobic group and a non-ionic or zwitterionic hydrophilic group; from 0 to 50%, based on the weight of surfactant, of acids and/or alcohols having a hydrophobic group and a carboxyl or hydroxyl group respectively; and from 0 to saturation of a water-soluble carbohydrate; said surfactant, acid, alcohol, and carbohydrate being present in proportions adapted to form a pourable structured suspending system; characterised in that at least 30% by weight of said hydrophobic groups are bent chain groups;
 - providing a pharmaceutical or veterinary active ingredient; and
 - contacting the structured surfactant system and the pharmaceutical or veterinary active ingredient.
25. (original) A suspension formed by the method of claim 24.
26. (canceled)
27. (currently amended) A food product or beverage comprising a continuous aqueous liquid phase, and suspended, non-colloidal solid, characterised in that said aqueous phase is a structured surfactant system having solid-suspending properties and comprising: water; surfactants, said surfactants consisting essentially of non-ionic and/or zwitterionic surfactants, each comprising at least one hydrophobic group and a non-ionic or zwitterionic hydrophilic group; from 0 to 50%, based on the weight of surfactant, of acids and/or alcohols having a hydrophobic group and a carboxyl or

hydroxyl group respectively; and from 0 to saturation of a water-soluble carbohydrate; said surfactant, acid, alcohol, and carbohydrate being present in proportions adapted to form a pourable structured suspending system; characterised in that at least 30% by weight of said hydrophobic groups are bent chain groups, which consists essentially of water; from 25% by weight, based on the weight of the suspending system, to saturation of a dissolved carbohydrate structurant; from 0 to 10% by weight, based on the weight of the suspending system, of electrolyte; and from 3 to 10% by weight, based on the weight of the suspending system, of a surfactant mixture consisting of (A) an edible surfactant, having an HLB greater than 10, (B) an edible surfactant, with a pH less than 10, in a weight ratio of from 10:1 to 1:1, (A):(B).

28. (currently amended) A ~~suspension of~~ structured surfactant system of claim 1 further comprising an alkaline earth metal soap ~~in a structured surfactant system according to any of claims 1 to 22.~~
29. (currently amended) A ~~suspension~~ structured surfactant system according to claim 28 wherein the alkaline earth metal soap is calcium stearate.
30. (currently amended) A ~~suspension~~ structured surfactant system according to ~~either of claims 28 and 29,~~ wherein the alkaline earth metal soap is present in an amount greater than 20%, but less than 48% by weight based on the weight of the ~~suspension~~ structured surfactant system.